CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-7 (canceled).

Claim 8 (previously presented). A method for determining a variable that is characteristic of a mass resting on a seating area of a seat, the method which comprises:

detecting at least one force acting on the seating area with at least one force sensor and outputting a measurement signal;

determining an estimated value of the variable that is characteristic of the mass resting on the seating area in dependence on that at least one force acting on the seating area; and

defining the estimated value as being reliable or unreliable depending on an oscillation behavior of the measurement signal of the at least one force sensor.

Claim 9 (previously presented). The method according to claim 8, wherein the defining step comprises determining the estimated value to be reliable or unreliable depending on a measure of an amplitude of the oscillations of the measurement signal of the at least one force sensor.

Claim 10 (previously presented). The method according to claim 9, wherein the defining step comprises determining the estimated value to be reliable or unreliable depending on a time duration of a predetermined change in the measure of the amplitude of the oscillation of the measurement signal.

Claim 11 (previously presented). The method according to claim 8, which comprises subjecting the measurement signal of the force sensor to a Walsh transformation and determining the estimated value to be reliable or unreliable depending on a measure for a sequential content of a Walsh-transformed measurement signal.

Claim 12 (currently amended). ~~The method according to claim 11, which comprises:~~ A method for determining a variable that is characteristic of a mass resting on a seating area of a seat, the method which comprises:

detecting at least one force acting on the seating area with at least one force sensor and outputting a measurement signal;

determining an estimated value of the variable that is characteristic of the mass resting on the seating area in dependence on that at least one force acting on the seating area;

defining the estimated value as being reliable or unreliable depending on an oscillation behavior of the measurement signal of the at least one force sensor;

<u>subjecting the measurement signal of the force sensor to a Walsh</u>

<u>transformation and determining the estimated value to be reliable or unreliable</u>

<u>depending on a measure for a sequential content of a Walsh-transformed</u>

<u>measurement signal; and</u>

forming the measure for the sequential content by adding ~~the amplitude~~

<u>amplitudes</u> of predetermined sequences ~~(s)~~ of the Walsh-transformed

measurement signal.

Claim 13 (previously presented). The method according to claim 12, which

comprises measuring a plurality of forces with a plurality of force sensors

outputting respective measurement signals, and subjecting the measurement

signals of the force sensors to the Walsh transformation, determining therefrom

a monitoring value for each measurement signal, and defining the estimated

value as being reliable or unreliable depending upon the monitoring values.

Claim 14 (previously presented). A device for determining a variable that is

characteristic of a mass resting on a seating area of a seat, the device

comprising:

at least one force sensor disposed to measure at least one force acting

on the seating area and to output a measurement signal;

means, connected to receive the measurement signal, for determining

an estimated value of the variable that is characteristic of the mass resting on

the seating area in dependence on the at least one force measured by the force sensor; and

means for determining whether the estimated value is reliable or the estimated value is unreliable in dependence on an oscillation behavior of the measurement signal of the at least one force sensor.

Claim 15 (new). The device according to claim 14, wherein the determining means subjects the measurement signal of the force sensor to a Walsh transformation and determines the estimated value to be reliable or unreliable depending on a measure for a sequential content of a Walsh-transformed measurement signal.

Claim 16 (new). The device according to claim 14, wherein the determining means forms the measure for the sequential content by adding amplitudes of predetermined sequences of the Walsh-transformed measurement signal.

Claim 17 (new). The method according to claim 12, wherein the defining step comprises determining the estimated value to be reliable or unreliable depending on a measure of an amplitude of the oscillations of the measurement signal of the at least one force sensor.

Claim 18 (new). The method according to claim 12, wherein the defining step comprises determining the estimated value to be reliable or unreliable

depending on a time duration of a predetermined change in the measure of the

amplitude of the oscillation of the measurement signal.